

Women wanted



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Tammy Yap is one of a few women working in video games field. See story, D7.

Biz Buzz

Lunch losses

Does your lunch fall by the workload wayside? It does for many of us, according to a survey released this week.

Nearly two-thirds, 58 percent, said they skip lunch if they're too busy, and almost as many — 43 percent — say they lunch for 15 minutes or less. And 15 percent said they eat lunch in their cars.

NH tells filmmakers:

'You're going to love it here'

◆ **Incentives:** As many states begin offering tax breaks to accommodate filmmakers, New Hampshire has some built-in advantages.

By **CONNIE MABIN**
The Associated Press

And **Sunday News Staff**

As states around the country try to lure film and television production companies with promises of tax breaks, New Hampshire is about to launch its own campaign.

Van McLeod, commissioner of the Department of Cultural Resources, said the state has just moved the New Hampshire Film and Television Office to his department from the Office of Travel and Tourism.

It has a small budget totaling \$100,000 annually, but McLeod and Matthew Newton, the manager of the film office, believe New Hampshire comes with a lot of bang to each buck already. Their challenge is to better get the word out.

When the "Brotherhood of Poland, New Hampshire," television pilot was shot in Plymouth, Newton estimates \$800,000 was pumped into the local economy.

While New Hampshire is looking seriously at incentives, McLeod and Newton believe many are built into New Hampshire's economy and way of life already.

While some states are promising rebates on taxes, McLeod wants to impress upon Hollywood that New Hampshire doesn't need new tax breaks.

"New Hampshire has no income tax, no sales tax, no capital gains tax, no property tax on machinery or equipment and no general film permits," McLeod said.

McLeod said he plans to put together a group of private citizens to invest in films. One thing he wants to make sure filmmakers around the world are clear about New Hampshire: "You're going to love it here."

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Actor Kris Kristofferson waves on the set of the movie "Disappearances" at Clark's Trading Post in Lincoln in April.

FILE PHOTO

NH tests Chile waters



◆ **Six New Hampshire companies take the plunge on trade mission.**

By JERRY MILLER

little trade, so far

Granite State companies have yet to really stick their toes in the water, when it comes to doing business in Chile.

farm-raised salmon and trout — the Chileans have significant food processing needs, which will increase as the government devotes more resources to

entiating themselves from other Latin American countries," Abramson said. "Chile has enjoyed an unprecedented amount of political and economic stabili-

ness people need to be patient and understanding," when doing business there. "Their approach doesn't equate to a lack of interest in

in playing those games."

Asked about pitfalls, White responded, "I really don't see any."

As for a potential language

And, it's less of an issue when a company hires a local representative, who understands the culture and speaks the language.

States push incentives for film production companies

Film

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The movie "On Golden Pond" was shot in New Hampshire in 1981 and a new feature film is expected to begin shooting here in the fall. About a half dozen independent films are shot here each year.

And while working hard to lure the big players, McLeod and Newton don't want to forget the little guys.

They are planning ad campaigns targeting film industry directories and in April will attend a major locations trade expo in Los Angeles.

Newton said: "I believe filmmakers will find just as many reasons for coming to New Hampshire as a filming destination as vacationers do as a visitor destination."

In Ohio

Jim Gelarden of Cleveland has been able to make a living working in an industry he loves, designing movie sets and helping plan television productions around the nation.

Seeing an established movie industry in his home state — and a chance to work in his native city — would make his job a lot sweeter. But for now, Gelarden must trade hometown dreams for good-paying gigs to the south.

"Film trucks have wheels so they can go anywhere and right now they're going where the

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MATTHEW NEWTON
NH Film and Television Office

best deals are," said Gelarden, a production designer from Cleveland whose resume includes the movie "Seabiscuit" and commercials for Pizza Hut and Nike. "And the best deals right now are in Louisiana."

As more film productions jump to Canada and other low-cost countries, lawmakers around the nation are taking notice of the lure of Louisiana, which in 2002 began offering a 15 percent rebate on the cost of movie and TV productions valued at \$8 million or more.

This year at least 13 other states — including Colorado, Maryland, New Mexico, Rhode Island and South Carolina — have proposed creating similar incentives, mostly through tax rebates or exemptions, or adding to their existing breaks.

"Not unlike manufacturing, the film industry has increasingly been going out of the



MATTHEW NEWTON,
NH Film Office

country and if you're going to compete on a global scale it's important that you have competing incentive programs or comparable incentive programs," said Alex Schott, director of the Louisiana Governor's Office of Film and TV.

In Louisiana

Louisiana's program created hundreds of new jobs and spawned \$375 million in 2004 revenue for the state from the making of films like "Ray" and "Mr. 3000." The revenue was up from \$20 million before the program.

In Ohio, a bill patterned after Louisiana's would create a tax credit of 15 percent to 20 percent based on a film company's total investment. The sponsor, Sen. Patricia Clancy, a Cincinnati Republican, expects the bill to get a hearing when the legislative session resumes this fall.



VAN MCLEOD,
NH Cultural Resources

"We feel that if this investment is made in Ohio, more people will want to come, our tourism dollars will increase and more films will be made here," she said. "And that, of course, leads to many more jobs."

Actor Sean Astin of "Lord of the Rings" and "Rudy" screenwriter Angelo Pizzo back a bill lingering in the Indiana House of Representatives that would give a 30 percent state tax credit on productions, among other incentives. Pizzo, who's also a producer, said he has two films he would shoot in Indiana if the measure becomes law.

Malcolm Petal, chief executive of New Orleans' Louisiana Institute of Film Technology, said tax breaks are often the deciding factor for what locations producers choose or whether a movie gets made. That is true especially for companies with

smaller budgets like the ones he works with to produce television movies, mini-series or documentaries.

"It's important because production costs are going up and also important because jobs are being lost to overseas (locations)," said Petal. "We're not in competition with Hollywood. We're trying to bring the films back from Canada and Romania ... and wherever else the productions are moving."

Arkansas says no

Not everyone is as interested in helping lower the price tag of transplanting the bright lights.

Arkansas turned down a bill that would have offered a tax incentive package that was tied to the number of movies a film production company made in the state. Similar legislation was spiked in Texas, Hawaii and Alabama.

Critics are leery of offering tax breaks at a time when many states are dealing with tight budgets and when many lawmakers are trying to simplify tax codes that already include several complex tax breaks for businesses.

Lowell Kalapa, president of the nonprofit Tax Foundation of Hawaii, said his group and others were opposed to the incentives for various reasons, including tight finances and because Hawaii already offers a host of tax breaks for filmmakers, including one on hotel taxes.

"Those of us who were against it were saying, 'We're actually spending money out the back door and you cannot balance the state budget if you continue to have these uncontrollable losses of revenue,'" Kalapa said.

The opposition won even though the producers of ABC's popular "Lost" were threatening to move production from the island of Oahu to a cheaper location away from Hawaii.

Attractive Hawaii

Ultimately Hawaii's United States address, year-round warm, sunny weather and beautiful beaches won over "Lost" producers, who agreed to stay.

Kalapa said that proves his point that additional incentives are unnecessary. "Those are the things that should be attractive to film producers. Why do we have to give them money?" he said.

Gelarden said he's closed a design studio in Cleveland and recently got an apartment in New Orleans because that's where movie work is. Recently, sets in the hot, humid Bayou have been transformed into snowy scenes he says could be Cleveland's bread and butter if Ohio helped make moviemaking cheaper.

"There are some amazing locations here and great stories to tell," Gelarden said. "That's some serious money to be spent."